THE LONDON ORATORY SCHOLA CANTORUM
CHARLES COLE

SACRED TREASURES OF *Spain*

GUERRERO
RIBERA
MORALES
ROBLEDO
ESQUIVEL
VIVANCO
VICTORIA
LOBO

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CONTENTS

TRACK LISTING ☞ *page 3*

INTRODUCTION ☞ *page 4*

SUNG TEXTS AND TRANSLATION ☞ *page 7*

PERFORMERS ☞ *page 10*

SACRED TREASURES OF *Spain*

1 **Regina caeli a 8** FRANCISCO GUERRERO (1528–1599) [4'23]

2 **O Domine Jesu Christe** FRANCISCO GUERRERO [4'46]

3 **Ave virgo sanctissima** FRANCISCO GUERRERO [5'02]

4 **O sacrum convivium** FRANCISCO GUERRERO [5'10]

Dimitte me ergo BERNARDINO DE RIBERA (*c*1520–?1580) [4'21]

5 Dimitte me ergo [3'23] 6 Et opertam mortis caligine [0'58]

7 **Peccantem me quotidie** CRISTÓBAL DE MORALES (*c*1500–1553) [3'51]

Salve regina MELCHOR ROBLEDO (*c*1520–before 7 April 1587) [10'17]

8 Salve regina [2'34] 9 Ad te clamamus [3'02]

10 Eia ergo, advocata nostra [0'36] 11 Et Jesum benedictum fructum [4'04]

Ego sum panis vivus JUAN ESQUIVEL (*c*1560–before 1630) [3'06]

12 Ego sum panis vivus [2'20] 13 Alleluia [0'45]

14 **Dulcissima Maria** SEBASTIÁN DE VIVANCO (*c*1551–1622) [5'48]

Ave Maria a 4 TOMÁS LUIS DE VICTORIA (1548–1611) [2'42]

15 Ave Maria, gratia plena [1'12] 16 Sancta Maria, mater Dei [1'30]

Ave Maria a 8 TOMÁS LUIS DE VICTORIA [6'06]

17 Ave Maria, gratia plena [3'49] 18 Ora pro nobis [2'17]

19 **O quam gloriosum** TOMÁS LUIS DE VICTORIA [2'27]

20 **Versa est in luctum** ALONSO LOBO (1555–1617) [5'42]

21 **O quam suavis est, Domine** ALONSO LOBO [6'00]

THE LONDON ORATORY SCHOLA CANTORUM
CHARLES COLE director

SACRED TREASURES OF SPAIN, the second in our series of recordings of liturgical music, celebrates the extraordinary creative output of composers working during the *Siglo de Oro*. Philip II's reign during the second half of the sixteenth century was truly a golden age in terms of the amazing wealth of riches which emerged at the hands of the greatest composers working in Catholic Spain. This recording represents a handful of these composers, all in some way interconnected, and in particular focuses on the two liturgical powerhouses of Philip II's kingdom: the cathedrals of Seville and Toledo. All the motets featured here are drawn from the Schola's repertory and are sung in the context of the liturgy at the London Oratory.

Music played an important role at St Philip Neri's first Oratory in Rome, both in the regular liturgy and also in the musical oratories which were pioneered there, combining readings, meditations and music as an aid to prayer. The Chiesa Nuova, where the Roman Oratory ultimately became established, drew in the young and fostered their faith. We aim to continue this mission, immersing the boys of the Schola in this repertory which so perfectly expresses truth, and we are delighted to be able to share this music and its higher purposes with a wider audience.

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The London Oratory Schola Cantorum at the 2019 Carmel Bach Festival in California © Anita Morrison

FRANCISCO GUERRERO was a chorister at Seville, then *maestro de capilla* at Jaén Cathedral for a brief period before returning to Seville as assistant (during which time one of the choristers was the young Alonso Lobo), eventually taking over as *maestro* in 1574. Whilst returning from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, he was twice captured and ransomed by pirates, a story detailed in an account he published about his journey to Jerusalem. The **Regina caeli a 8** is a tightly woven and effusive setting of the Marian antiphon for Eastertide. Throughout, the motet alludes to the original chant in a kaleidoscopic presentation, using excerpts and fragments rather than a complete *cantus firmus*, as can be heard right at the outset where the first trebles initially follow the Gregorian melody before breaking free and joyously leaping upwards at 'laetare'. **O Domine Jesu Christe** was written for Palm Sunday and strikes a more sombre vein, giving the impression that the composer has imposed self-restraint, yet nevertheless achieves great beauty. Two thirds of the way through, the sense of onward motion withdraws to give way to a hushed reverence for the text 'deprecor te'. **Ave virgo sanctissima** was Guerrero's most successful motet and was published in the furthest reaches of the Spanish Empire, as far away as Mexico and South America. The two treble parts sing in canon throughout, and at the word 'Salve' Guerrero quotes the iconic opening of the solemn 'Salve regina' in repeated ascending iterations. **O sacrum convivium**, a striking six-part setting of a Corpus Christi text, is perhaps one of the best examples of Guerrero's consummate ability to draw out prolonged lines of extraordinary beauty. A sense of serene joy pervades the slow-moving harmonic landscape, with the internal parts moving in gentle submission. The final 'Alleluia' section features a distinctive melodic figure that uses three successive rising or descending thirds spanning the interval of a seventh, symbolizing the Trinity as divine perfection.

Bernardino de Ribera's first major position was as *maestro* at Ávila Cathedral. Among his charges in the choir there were the young Tomás Luis de Victoria and Sebastián de Vivanco. Ribera went on to become *maestro* at Toledo Cathedral and then at Murcia Cathedral, where he had sung as a boy when his own father had been *maestro*. The six-part **Dimitte me ergo** seems on the surface to belie its desolate text, the music being written in a major mode. However, there is a tender sensitivity in the sparingly crafted lines, and at 'ad terram tenebrosam' the voices descend into the silent void.

Cristóbal de Morales was the most influential Spanish composer of his time, and a sign of the esteem in which he was held is demonstrated by the fact that Guerrero, Palestrina and Victoria all wrote works based on his own. Born in Seville, he was *maestro* at Ávila, then at Plasencia Cathedral, before departing for Rome where he sang in the Papal choir for ten years. On returning to Spain, he became *maestro* at Toledo before moving to his final position as *maestro* at Málaga Cathedral. **Peccantem me quotidie** is a powerfully vivid setting of a penitential text containing brief moments of polyphonic writing but ultimately always returning to earthbound homophonic movement. The steady descent of the parts at 'in inferno' is contrasted with the freely rising quavers at 'et salva me'.

Melchor Robledo sang at the Royal Chapel in Granada before being appointed *maestro de capilla* at Tarragona Cathedral, and subsequently at Zaragoza. This extensive setting of the **Salve regina** alternates polyphony with the solemn 'Salve' chant, using the version in common usage in Spain during the sixteenth century, here taken from Luis de Villafranca's plainsong instruction book, published in Seville in 1565. The two outer polyphonic sections are in six parts, while the inner section (track 9) uses just the four upper parts. Robledo's approach to the harmonic

contradictions that sometimes arise as a result of the modality is to allow space for both, giving rise occasionally to distinctive and colourful moments.

Juan Esquivel—or Esquivel [de] Barahona as he was sometimes known, in accordance with the Spanish custom of adding his mother's family name—was prebendary and chapelmaster at the Cathedral of Ciudad Rodrigo, where he had been a chorister as a child. For much of his career, his patron was Don Pedro Ponce de León, the Dominican Bishop of Ciudad Rodrigo. Esquivel based a number of parody Masses on motets by Guerrero, who was clearly a respected influence. **Ego sum panis vivus** is a concise yet beautifully rendered setting of a Corpus Christi text, concluding with a joyful 'Alleluia'.

In addition to singing together as boys in the choir at Ávila, Sebastián de Vivanco and Tomás Luis de Victoria both went on to the seminary. Vivanco held three cathedral positions: at Segovia, Ávila and finally Salamanca. It is interesting to note that when a statue of Saint Teresa of Ávila was commissioned during the nineteenth century by the people of Ávila to mark her 300th anniversary, the names of other historical Ávilans of note were inscribed on the pedestal. Vivanco, not Victoria, was the only musician included, giving us a sense of the esteem in which he was still held. **Dulcissima Maria** is a highly expressive motet in honour of Our Lady.

Following his choristership at Ávila Cathedral, Victoria later travelled to Rome to study for the priesthood. After ordination, he lived for a time with St Philip Neri, forming a lasting relationship with St Philip's Oratory. After some years in Rome, he returned to his native Spain as chaplain to King Philip II's sister, the Empress María, at the Descalzas Reales in Madrid where he was also chapelmaster. Of the two settings of the 'Hail Mary' accredited to Victoria, no Renaissance sources exist of the popular **Ave Maria a 4**, so we cannot be confident of its authenticity, despite it commonly being ascribed to the composer. The **Ave Maria a 8**, certainly by Victoria, sets an extended version of the text. The double choirs, initially deployed antiphonally, combine to create rich and sonorous textures. **O quam gloriosum**, a motet for All Saints, was written during Victoria's time in Rome, when he was organist at the Aragonese church, Santa Maria di Monserrato. Famed for its verve and drive, this popular motet's unrelenting energy pauses only briefly at 'amicti stolis albis' as the righteous are clothed for heaven.

Alonso Lobo began his musical career as a chorister and later as assistant to Guerrero at Seville Cathedral. He was then appointed *maestro* at Toledo Cathedral before returning to serve in the same position at Seville for the remainder of his years. **Versa est in luctum** was written upon the death of Philip II and is considered to be one of the masterworks of the period—a fitting tribute to a Catholic king and patron of this golden era. And perhaps **O quam suavis est**, a ravishing six-part setting of Saint Thomas Aquinas's text, could be considered Lobo's own crowning glory of the Siglo de Oro.

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Francisco Guerrero

1	Regina caeli laetare. Alleluia. Quia quem meruisti portare. Alleluia. Resurrexit, sicut dixit. Alleluia. Ora pro nobis Deum. Alleluia.	*Queen of heaven, rejoice. Alleluia.* *For he whom you were worthy to bear. Alleluia.* *Has risen as he said. Alleluia.* *Pray for us to God. Alleluia.*

ANTIPHON TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY FROM EASTER UNTIL PENTECOST

2	O Domine Jesu Christe, adoro te in cruce vulneratum, felle et aceto potatum: deprecor te, ut vulnera tua sint remedium animae meae.	*O Lord Jesus Christ,* *I worship thee wounded on the cross,* *having drunk of gall and vinegar:* *I pray to thee that thy wounds* *may be the remedy of my soul.*

from THE ORATIONS OF ST GREGORY ON THE PASSION OF CHRIST

3	Ave virgo sanctissima, Dei mater piissima, Maris stella clarissima: Salve semper gloriosa, Margarita pretiosa, Sicut lilium formosa, Nitens, olens velut rosa.	*Hail, most holy Virgin,* *most righteous mother of God,* *brightest star of the sea:* *hail, ever glorious,* *precious pearl,* *fair as the lily,* *shining and fragrant as the rose.*

OLD SPANISH ANTIPHON FOR THE NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, 24 JUNE

4	O sacrum convivium, in quo Christus sumitur: recolitur memoria passionis eius, mens impletur gratia, et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur. Alleluia.	*O sacred feast in which Christ is taken:* *the memory of his passion is recalled,* *the soul is filled with thanks,* *and a promise is given to us of future glory. Alleluia.*

ANTIPHON AT SECOND VESPERS ON THE FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI

Bernardino de Ribera

5	Dimitte me ergo ut plangam paululum dolorem meum antequam vadam et non revertar, ad terram tenebrosam.	*Send me away, therefore,* *so that I may bemoan my sorrow a little* *before I go and return not,* *to a land dark.*
6	Et opertam mortis caligine.	*And covered with the mist of death.*

from THE NINTH LESSON AT MATINS FOR THE DEAD

Cristóbal de Morales

7	Peccantem me quotidie, et non me paenitentem, timor mortis conturbat me: quia in inferno nulla est redemptio. Miserere mei, Deus, et salva me.	*Sinning every day and not repenting,* *the fear of death troubles me:* *for in hell there is no redemption.* *Have mercy on me, God, and save me.*

SEVENTH RESPOND AT MATINS FOR THE DEAD

Melchor Robledo
CHARLES DEAN cantor

8	Salve regina, mater misericordiae:	*Hail queen, mother of mercy:*
	vita, dulcedo, spes nostra, salve.	*our life, our sweetness, our hope, hail.*
9	Ad te clamamus exsules filii Evae.	*To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve.*
	Ad te suspiramus,	*To thee do we send up our sighs,*
	gementes et flentes in hac lacrimarum valle.	*mourning and weeping in this vale of tears.*
10	Eia ergo, advocata nostra,	*Turn therefore, most gracious advocate,*
	illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.	*thine eyes of mercy toward us.*
11	Et Jesum benedictum fructum ventris tui	*And after this our exile, show unto us*
	nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.	*the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus.*
	O clemens, o pia, o dulcis virgo semper Maria.	*O clement, O loving, O sweet ever Virgin Mary.*

ANTIPHON TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY AFTER PENTECOST UNTIL ADVENT

Juan Esquivel

12	Ego sum panis vivus, qui de caelo descendi:	*I am the living bread which came down from heaven:*
	si quis manducaverit ex hoc pane,	*if any man eat of this bread,*
	vivet in aeternum.	*he shall live for ever.*
13	Alleluia.	*Alleluia.*

BENEDICTUS ANTIPHON AT LAUDS ON THE FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI

Sebastián de Vivanco

14	Dulcissima Maria, amore tuo langueo,	*Sweetest Mary, I languish for love of thee,*
	quia suavis et benigna es.	*for thou art good natured and kind.*
	Vultum tuum deprecabuntur	*All who are wealthy among the people*
	omnes divites plebis.	*make entreaties to thee.*
	Pulchra es virgo Maria, et macula non est in te.	*Thou art beautiful, Virgin Mary, and there is no fault in thee.*

ANONYMOUS DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY DERIVED FROM PSALM 45 AND THE SONG OF SONGS

Tomás Luis de Victoria
TOBIAS DEAN cantor

15	Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.	*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.*
	Benedicta tu in mulieribus,	*Blessed art thou among women,*
	et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus Christus.	*and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus Christ.*
16	Sancta Maria, mater Dei,	*Holy Mary, mother of God,*
	ora pro nobis peccatoribus,	*pray for us sinners*
	nunc, et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.	*now and in the hour of our death. Amen.*

LUKE 1: 28, 42, CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

17 Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.
Benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.
Sancta Maria, regina caeli,
dulcis et pia, o mater Dei.
18 Ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
ut cum electis te videamus.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, queen of heaven,
sweet and loving, O mother of God.
Pray for us sinners,
that with the chosen we may see thee.

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY VARIANT OF THE AVE MARIA, INCORPORATING MARIAN LITANIES

19 O quam gloriosum est regnum,
in quo, cum Christo, gaudent omnes sancti:
amicti stolis albis,
sequuntur Agnum quocumque ierit.

O how glorious the kingdom
wherein all the saints rejoice with Christ:
clothed in white robes
they follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

MAGNIFICAT ANTIPHON AT SECOND VESPERS ON THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS

Alonso Lobo

20 Versa est in luctum cithara mea,
et organum meum in vocem flentium.
Parce mihi, Domine, nihil enim sunt dies mei.

My harp is turned to grieving,
and my music to the voice of those who weep.
Spare me, Lord, for my days are worth nothing.

JOB 30: 31, 7: 16

21 O quam suavis est, Domine, spiritus tuus,
qui ut dulcedinem tuam
in filios demonstrares,
pane suavissimo de caelo praestito,
esurientes reples bonis,
fastidiosos divites
dimittens inanes.

How gracious is thy spirit, O Lord,
who, to show thy loving kindness
towards thy children,
hast given the sweetest bread of heaven,
filling the hungry with good things,
and sending the discontented rich
away empty.

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS (1225–1274)
ANTIPHON AT FIRST VESPERS ON THE FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI; WISDOM 12: 1, 16: 21

THE SCHOLA CANTORUM OF THE LONDON ORATORY SCHOOL

treble Darragh Bunting, Davide Castelli, Massimo Chiocca, Felix Colyer-Blake, Mattheus Daly, Luca D'Amico, Marco D'Amico, Matteo D'Amico, Leo De Flammineis, Charles Dean, Tobias Dean, William Diffey, Hugo Farmer, James Gardner, Thomas Griffin, Benjamin Jardim, Michael King, Alfred Quantrill, Ben Smith, Benedict Verdin, Nathaniel Verdin, Oliver Waldron, Aidan Woods

alto Oisin Byrne, Jacob Carey, Luca De Flammineis, James Foley, Luca Hayes Lorente, Alexander O'Sullivan, Joshua Rodgers, Oliver Smith, David Martin*, Rory McCleery*

tenor Maurice Cole, Xavier Ferros, Nicolás Garcia-Peguinho, Luca Garzolini, Giuseppe Maurino, Simon Biazeck*, Peter DiToro*†, Graham Neal*

bass Michael Craddock, Charles Desa (Schola prefect), Oisin Duggan-Dennehy, Wenzel Kinsky, James O'Keeffe, Nicholas O'Keeffe, Harry O'Sullivan, Thomas Richardson, Julian Saade, Luca Slade, Grzegorz Todryk, Edmund Danon*, Cheyney Kent*†, William Townend*

* Layclerks † Schola alumni

probationers Matteo Castelli, Freddie Roberts

voice trainer Anita Morrison

director Charles Cole

www.londonoratoryschola.com

THE SCHOLA CANTORUM OF THE LONDON ORATORY SCHOOL

Patrons: HE Robert Cardinal Sarah, HRH Princess Michael of Kent, Sir James MacMillan CBE

The Schola Cantorum of The London Oratory School sings the Vigil Mass at the London Oratory every Saturday evening in term time and on major feast days for School Mass throughout the year. Founded in 1996, the choir gives Catholic boys aged seven to eighteen the opportunity of a choral education within the state-education system. In addition to its liturgical role, the Schola has made many recordings and has toured widely abroad, performing throughout the USA and Europe.

In recent years the Schola has sung at the Spanish cathedrals of Madrid, Granada, Segovia and Toledo as well as at the Monastery of San Lorenzo el Real in El Escorial, and during a tour to Venice they sang at St Mark's Basilica and at the Church of San Salvador.

A tour to the East Coast of the USA included performances in Boston, New York and Washington, DC, while the choir's most recent tour to the USA included appearances at the Cathedral of the Madeleine, Salt Lake City, and a number of the Californian missions.

The Schola sang at the canonization of John Henry Newman at St Peter's, Rome, in 2019 as well as at a number of services and concerts in and around the Vatican, including a reception attended by HRH The Prince of Wales, and a private recital for the Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI.

The choir is closely associated with Aid to the Church in Need, singing for services and events to help the charity's work in providing support to persecuted Christians in the Middle East. The trebles also sing for a number of the Royal Ballet's productions at the Royal Opera House, including *The Dream* and *The Nutcracker*. Recent concert performances by the Schola at the London Oratory include Monteverdi's *Vespers* and J S Bach's B minor Mass, the *St John* and *St Matthew Passions*, and the *Christmas Oratorio*.

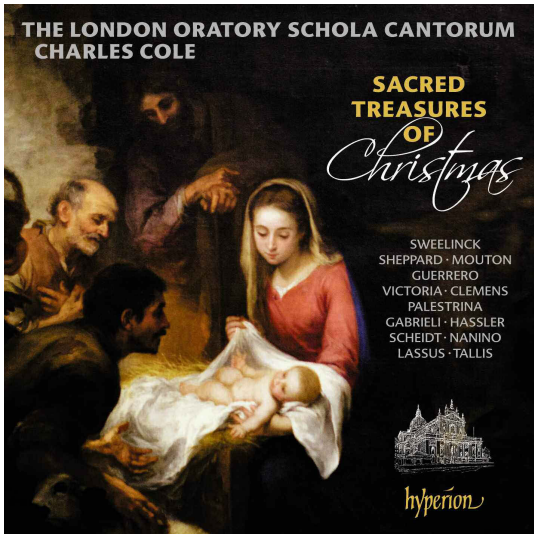
CHARLES COLE

Charles Cole began his musical training as a chorister at Westminster Cathedral. He went on to win scholarships to Ampleforth and Exeter College, Oxford, before returning to Westminster Cathedral as organ scholar. He was appointed Director of the Schola Cantorum at The London Oratory School in 2012 and is also Assistant Director of Music at the London Oratory, where he directs the London Oratory Junior Choir.

In 2010 he directed the children's chorus in a 400th-anniversary performance of the Monteverdi *Vespers* with The Monteverdi Choir conducted by Sir John Eliot Gardiner at the Royal Albert Hall as part of the BBC Proms, and in two further performances at The Sheldonian in Oxford, and Durham Cathedral.

On the occasion of Pope Benedict XVI's visit to London, he conducted London Brass in Sir James MacMillan's *Tu es Petrus*, which was commissioned for Mass at Westminster Cathedral, and played the organ for the Prayer Vigil at Hyde Park, which drew a congregation of 80,000. He has played at many prestigious venues in London, including Westminster Abbey, St Paul's Cathedral and the Royal Albert Hall for a Prom with Jeremy Summerly and the Oxford Camerata.

He was invited by composer Sir James MacMillan to speak about Gregorian chant at Musica Sacra Scotland's inaugural conference, and in the Holy Land he has led a number of choral workshops for both children's and adult choirs in Bethlehem, Nazareth and Jerusalem. He is a board member of the Church Music Association of America and has taken part in recent colloquia in Chicago, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Indianapolis, specializing in Gregorian chant and choral direction. In recent years he has given organ recitals in St Petersburg, at Notre Dame in Paris (as part of the 850th-anniversary-year celebrations), the Cathedral of the Madeleine in Salt Lake City, and St Saviour's Church in Jerusalem.



SACRED TREASURES OF Christmas

A sequence of music for Christmas, Epiphany and Candlemas

SWEELINCK Hodie Christus natus est · GABRIELI O magnum mysterium · CHANT Alleluia 'Dies sanctificatus'
HASSLER Verbum caro factum est · MOUTON Nesciens mater · SCHEIDT Puer natus in Bethlehem
GUERRERO Pastores loquebantur · LASSUS Resonet in laudibus
VICTORIA O magnum mysterium; Alma redemptoris mater a 5 · PALESTRINA Surge, illuminare, Jerusalem
LASSUS Omnes de Saba · SHEPPARD Reges Tharsis et insulae · CLEMENS Magi veniunt ab oriente
NANINO Diffusa est gratia · TALLIS Videte miraculum

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Recording Engineer DAVID HINITT
Recording Producer ADRIAN PEACOCK
Editor WILL BROWN
Booklet Editor TODD HARRIS
Executive Producer SIMON PERRY
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Front illustration: *The Virgin and Child* (*c*1565) by Luis de Morales (*c*1509–1586)
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